

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the application is respectfully requested. Claims 12-20 were in the application, claims 1-11 having been cancelled, claims 17-20 were allowed, and claim 12 has been amended.

Entry of the amendment to claim 12 is proper in accordance with MPEP 714.12:

“Any amendment that will place the application either in condition for allowance or in better form for appeal may be entered. Also, amendments filed after a final rejection, but before or on the date of filing an appeal, complying with objections or requirements as to form are to be permitted after final action in accordance with 37 CFR 1.116(b)”

As claim 12 has been amended to include limitations which make claim 12 commensurate in scope with allowed claim 17, entry is proper as placing the application in condition for allowance.

In particular, by this amendment, the specific distinguishing limitations identified in the reasons for allowance, related to using plier means for holding and overturning the containers, with nozzle means connected to the plier means entering an opening of the container and spraying sterilizing agent therein, are now specifically recited in claim 12.

Consequently, the rejection of claims 12-16 as being obvious over Boucher, U.S. patent no. 3,172,434 in view of Achhammer, U.S. patent no. 6,185,910 has been rendered moot.

Based on the above amendments and remarks, favorable consideration and allowance of the application are respectfully requested. However should the examiner believe that direct contact with the applicant's attorney would advance the prosecution of the application, the examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

Respectfully submitted,

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